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On the State of the Citizens

A Message to President Truman

The President of the United States
Blair House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

We have studied your message on the State of the Union delivered to the Congress on January 5, and your related budget message of January 10.

As President, you are required by the Constitution to inform the Congress on the State of the Union. Citizens are authorized under the first article of the Bill of Rights "to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

Having pondered your words, we, representing some thousands of Americans, herewith respectfully send you a message on the State of the Citizens. It is a petition for a redress of the most serious of grievances.

The Nature of Our Grievance

Our grievance is, that the courses recommended in your advice to the Congress will, if taken, serve immeasurably to advance a conspiracy to destroy the American Republic and to substitute therefor a Socialist society which must in time inevitably become a Communist State.

We acquit you personally, Mr. President, of any conscious desire or intention to bring about this evil end. We believe you love America and the institutions which have made it possible for you to occupy its highest office.

But to acquit you of wrong intentions, Mr. President, is not to say the policies you have been led to endorse can have other than evil effects. We believe you have been badly advised. In short, although we shrink from saying so to the President of the United States, we think you are being used. We think you are being used by a coterie of people who know exactly where they want to go, and what needs to be done to get there. We earnestly hope that you will repudiate them and their advice, and return to policies American in their nature so that our Republic may live.

A few days before you addressed the Congress, Mr. President, a remarkable publication appeared under the title "State of the Union—A Program for Liberal

America." You probably have not seen it, but you should see it and think through what it means. It is a special section of the *New Republic*, extreme left-wing socialist journal, of which Henry Wallace was formerly editor.

You would not dispute, Mr. President, that this journal speaks for left-wing socialism in America. Its program is that of leftist, world socialism and is in sharp contrast with the historic American platforms of either the Republican or Democratic parties.

As one reads through this organ of left-wing socialist doctrine, he becomes first, surprised, then shocked, then astounded. *For this socialist program, published and mailed before your message to the Congress, is the program your message recommended—hook, line and sinker. There are no differences of any importance whatsoever.*

This is too much to have been mere accident or coincidence. You are being used. And that, sir, is our grievance: that the high office of President of the United States is being used as an unwitting instrument to revolutionize American life and to smother individual liberty under the weight of a Collectivist State. We want redress, sir—redress which you can give, or, if you will not give it, we must look to a Congress with courage enough to rise above every partisan consideration and prove itself to be composed of men and women who, in the supreme test, put the preservation and welfare of America above every other consideration.

We know that your instincts are sound, Mr. President. Not so many months ago, before a gathering of newspaper reporters, you called economic and price controls "police state methods." We are persuaded that the real Harry S. Truman spoke through those words. We are equally convinced that the language and ideology of your message to the Congress was neither the language nor the ideology of the real Harry S. Truman. We plead with you to do the bravest thing that any man can call upon himself to do: to recall your message, to say frankly to the Congress and to the American people: "I was badly advised. Let us go forward according to the genius of American freedom, not along the path that leads to collectivist serf-

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dom." If you do that, you will prove yourself a great American, a great President. You will have saved the Republic.

The Budget Itself

Let us consider your budget—\$42,000,000,000, nearly, and more to come, for the next fiscal year. You cannot be held responsible for all of it. Seventy-six cents out of each budget dollar is earmarked for the cost of past or future war. We are paying now a first installment on the bill for our folly in gratuitously injecting ourselves into two savage wars that were not our wars—wars in which it was against our interest to enter, and from which we might have stood apart with honor. Had we abstained from entering World War I, a negotiated peace would have preserved the European balance of power and guaranteed the tranquility of Europe for another fifty years. There would have been no shattered Germany to spawn a Hitler, and the world as a consequence would have been spared the cataclysmic destruction of 1939-1945. A strong, united Europe would have then been able to contain the Soviet without our aid—if indeed Russian Communism could have survived at all in a healthy world. Nor would we have committed the crowning stupidity of having destroyed Communism's two most powerful enemies, only to turn frantically to arming ourselves and highly uncertain allies in the hope of replacing the powers we have just demolished.

Our predicament now, Mr. President, is the direct result of foreign adventure under two Democratic Administrations, cheered on by many a Republican "statesman" who could not see the natural and probable consequences of folly. And now we are faced with what may be an inescapable third war, flowing from the two futile wars of our time. Yet, as we prepare to fight it, shall we cry havoc against World Communism and at the same moment prepare to embrace it at home? For the Socialism into which your program will plunge us is but the half way house from the heights of liberty down to the abyss of Communism. The hill is steep. To slide down is easy. But, if we do not retrace our steps now, shall we ever be able to climb back again? What nation ever has?

A Statist Economic Program

Let us look at your economic program, Mr. President. It is statist. It is supposed to be for a particular emergency, but it will end up by being permanent. And, taken as a whole, it is highly inflationary—it will further destroy the value of the dollar, feeding the mad nightmare of a false prosperity that is bound to blow up in our face in an explosion from which our economy may not escape. It is Government, and not business, that has already made the dollar worth only a fraction of its former value. "Controls" are the futile attempts of politicians to hide the results of their own mad manipulations of other people's money. Let us look at the pattern your advisers have persuaded you to seek:

1. There is to be more and ruinous taxation, siphoning off that venture capital without which a free economy cannot build for the future.

2. "Rent controls" are to be extended and "strengthened"—though it is these very controls which have created and are continuing the so-called "housing shortage." If you will permit us to see and talk with you, Mr. President, we can prove this irrefutably. There

are more available dwelling units in the U.S.A. today, in proportion to the population, than there were in 1939, when there was no "shortage." Remove rent "controls" today, and you will have no shortage in six months.

3. You ask for "standby" wage and price "controls." Why do you ask for them if you do not expect to use them? Perhaps *you* do not expect to use them. But the human spiders who are spinning the statist web about our whole economy expect to use them. The inflation caused by Government and Government alone will in all likelihood get much worse. With such a vast budget creating new purchasing power on the one hand and depleting domestic markets by sending so much of our manufactures abroad on the other, further depreciation of the dollar is a matter of mathematical certainty. Do you think those who are using you do not know this? They know it very well—as they also know well what the effects of price controls will be.

Such "controls" will create "black markets"—that is, *real* markets where the law of supply and demand will continue to operate—leading to police action to smash such markets as unlawful and immoral. It will be the politically controlled market of fiat money set at a phony value that the state will enforce with police action, and the free dealings of free men will have become a crime. So we shall, with rapid strides, descend perhaps forever, to the very police-state level you have deplored. Is this what you want, Mr. President?

4. But your advisers want other economic controls, too, and taken all together they draw clearly the picture of the police state.

Here are some of them: Further controls over credit; regulation of trading in commodity exchanges; continued export controls; priorities and allocations in the transportation field; priorities and allocations for key materials; heavily loaded "anti-trust" laws not against *all* monopolies but against business corporations whose only crime is that they are successful; continued farm subsidies and price supports; Federal control of resources under tidelands and navigable streams; renewal of the "reciprocal trade agreements" by which Federal bureaucrats can hold life and death power over American business; raising of the "minimum wage" to 75c per hour.

Bureaucrats' Utopia

Or Citizens' Hell?

Taken all together these are the outlines of the bureaucrats' utopia, which is the citizens' hell. Doubtless there is a proper, though limited, activity rightfully belonging to government in some of these matters. But it is not the sort of activity the collectivists who are using you have in mind at all. And the arguments for these police-state powers are unscrupulously dishonest, trading upon the natural innocence of the great majority of people as to how our complicated economy works.

Do these enemies of freedom explain to the people that it is *Government* which is the chief gambler on commodity exchanges, and that Government is cheerfully losing millions of the people's money each year in such gambling? They do not. Do they truthfully tell the people that so-called price supports are designed to create artificial shortages that will keep prices of farm products high to the housewife, while the American family pays double for this stupidity—once in

high prices for what the family eats and again in taxes used to buy up farm products which may be destroyed or given away? They do not.

Do they tell the people that the raising of the minimum wage, which sounds noble and humanitarian, will actually close businesses and destroy jobs, throwing more people on relief, which is actually what the socializers want? They do not.

These things, brought about by themselves, they blame on "business"—then seek new powers to bring more misery that can be blamed on "business." When they cry out against "monopoly" do they truthfully tell the people that Government "planning" is creating colossal politically managed monopolies beside which the largest private corporations appear puny? They do not.

5. The conspirators who are making you their cat-paw, Mr. President, have put into your mouth the strangest proposal ever to come from an American President. Through you they ask for legislation empowering them to set up at public expense new manufacturing facilities—the first suggestion mentioned steel—whenever in their judgment such facilities are needed.

This is state socialism, naked and unashamed. It assumes the statist doctrine that it is the function of government to supply the whole economy with everything bureaucrats may deem necessary. It is not American doctrine. It assumes the statist doctrine that tax-free government manufacturing facilities may compete with private manufacturers who pay taxes, and who thus may be destroyed with their own tax money. This has been a favorite device of the statist in the power field since 1933. Now they are asking to extend it to all industry.

This is revolution, Mr. President. Or rather, it is counter-revolution. It is revolution against American freedom back to the absolutism with which free men thought they were done forever. When once the American people grasp its inwardness, they will not want it. As an honest man, do you think they should be deceived?

The Spinning of the Web

But these proposals for the slow strangulation of the American free economy are only the radial strands of the spider-web. Coupled with them the conspirators have induced you to propose a whole series of circular strands which will make the death-trap of freedom too strong for escape. These are the so-called "social services" recommended in your message.

Now there is monumental deception in the manner in which these supposedly humanitarian proposals are presented to the people. The politicians can talk glibly about what "they" will provide—and all for free. "They" will furnish education for the young, security to the old, subsistence to the unemployed, high prices to the farmer, high wages to labor, low prices to the consumer, free medical care for everybody from womb to tomb, low-cost "public power," low-cost public housing, and full employment for all. "They" will do all this!

Such promises are the cruelest deception that could be offered to a free people. For none of these things is free—they will be paid for at exorbitant prices, and with added political brokerage, out of the tax money of the whole people. One of these will be the actual,

stupendous money-cost to everybody—which the politicians will carefully conceal as long as they can, though not forever. The other price will be the loss of the people's freedom. It is time the American people were taught to beware of bureaucrats bringing gifts.

Government has nothing to give the citizen except what it first takes from the citizen. Nothing else. Government has no other source of income. It is not a producer of wealth. It is a taker, then a spender.

Those words should be chiseled in black across the facade of every "public" building in the land, and carried in every private purse. Government has nothing to give the American people that it has not first wrenched from them. But here is the fact most people do not understand: we do not get back all, or anywhere near all, the money that government so generously proposes to spend for our "welfare." *There is a service charge*—the expense of rendering the "service." And the service charge levied by Government on the American people is already fantastically high. No private business could afford such an establishment of drones as the Federal bureaucracy has generously given itself *with our money*. No wonder we get only a small part of it back in the "services" which are so freely promised us!

"Free"?

Free aid to education, *free* medicine, *free* security, *free* services, Mr. President? Not even *low-cost*, *efficient* provision of these things, even granted that they are any of the Federal Government's business. If your budget goes through, there will be an average Federal tax of \$312 on every man, woman and child in America, just for one fiscal year. Let the average family of four ponder that one, Mr. President! Their share of the expense is \$1,248 yearly—more than \$100 every month going to support the bureaucracy.

How much will dribble back in "services" provided by a generous Government? One quarter? One eighth? One tenth? Who knows? Who cares? Government is Santa Claus and every day is Christmas! Santa will bring everything, dear children of the welfare state. But first he will visit you—and pick your pocket.

The conspirators who are making you their "front" know all about this, Mr. President. They planned it that way. They know that the American people are the most generous people on earth, that it is easy to appeal to their higher motives for providing education, medical care for "the underprivileged" (O blessed word, worth twenty billions in taxes!), "slum clearance" (O most ineffable word, good for a million jobs to the pious faithful!). They know that financial statements and budgets of over a thousand pages anesthetize almost everybody, and that the appeal to "do good" will lift the eyes of the people from the price they must pay, up from such sordid details to the shining, beautiful mountains.

And while the people's eyes are turned to the sunlit, rosy peaks, the bureaucrats will put on them gilded fetters of iron, labeled "public housing," "slum clearance," "health insurance," "Federal aid to education," "cheap public power," "social security." Then they will be marched off to the Government-owned mines, since it is only right and equitable that they should pay with their labor for the shelter, medicine,

schooling, lights and security provided for them—just like any other inmates of any other jail.

Many of the parts of this program to transform free America into the world's largest and best-run prison, Mr. President, have been sponsored by this pressure group or that. It is a grim irony, and gives us little pleasure, to predict that certain of these groups stand to lose their shirts if they get what they ask for.

Will Teachers Really Benefit?

Take so-called "Federal Aid to Education," for example. The conspirators know well why they want it—to mold coming generations to be good, pliant subjects of the police state. But they have stirred up the teachers—in the main good people and underpaid—who think that "Federal Aid" will bring money in their pocket. What a disillusionment the teachers will have! Especially the teachers in the big, rich states, who are furnishing most of the support.

Look at New York, for example. The teachers see only that "Federal Aid" will give New York \$12,010,000. But what they have not been told is that New York's share of the total cost will be \$39,210,000. This means that \$27,200,000 of potential school money will be drained out of the state. When the implications of that one sink in, what will the teachers of New York think about "Federal Aid"? Similarly, Illinois will get about seven and a half million and lose about thirty; Michigan will lose fourteen million to get six. Ironically, it is only the Southern and border states that will benefit—just where opposition is strongest. This means the conspirators are about to employ Federal funds to reduce by subsidy and "education" the last great area in the United States where love of freedom and objection to socialism is most pronounced.

As for the Taft-Hartley Law, the same observation holds true. That law, as the conspirators well know, is no "slave labor" law. It is a charter of freedom for the rank and file man who works, to keep him from being pushed around and bled white by the barons of labor who treat their followers as if they were cattle. It is also a charter of protection for the public against the depredations of labor bosses. The rank and file who support repeal of the act are being used, too—used to forge fetters for their own wearing, and to break down our free society by surrendering their own freedom. Some day they will regret it bitterly.

The so-called "civil rights" program, high on the priority list of the conspirators, is another proposal ostensibly to aid a "minority." But in fact it will, by the use of force and coercion in areas the Government has no right to enter, worsen rather than better the lot of all "minorities." It will subject both employer and employee to the whims of bureaucracy, destroy the free choice of both, and finally reduce everybody concerned to the status of serfs rather than citizens. But Moscow wants it. International socialism wants it. They have good reasons.

But why do you want it, Mr. President? We happen to know that in your own heart and mind you detest it, and know what we say is true. Will you not have the courage to say so?

Our Grievance

We are aggrieved by all these things, Mr. President, and by others in your program with which we do not have the space to deal at this time. We shall address you concerning them in the near future.

The conclusion is inescapable that there are those close to you who are a part of a conspiracy. Strong evidence exists that Alger Hiss, one of the closest advisers of your predecessor, and even of you, yourself, is a part of the conspiracy. And it was the same Mr. Hiss who went to Yalta with Mr. Roosevelt, and may have been the chief influence in signing away the liberty of millions in countries now under the heel of the USSR—including China, our shamefully betrayed ally.

Mr. Hiss, moreover, was a ringleader at Dumbarton Oaks, where the structure of the UN was outlined, and the chief American influence at San Francisco when the UN was formally organized.

This Hiss has already been indicted by a Federal Grand Jury. There is strong evidence that he had many accomplices, and there is more than a suspicion that there are NOW many others in the Government of the United States who have been or are still, spies or stooges of the Soviet Union. It is clear that Soviet influence has reached into high places in the Government of 148 million American people.

Our Petition

Our petition for redress of grievances is then twofold:

First, we ask you to repudiate utterly the conspiracy to destroy the freedom and independence of the United States, and the program for its accomplishment contained in your message on the State of the Union. It is not fitting that the President of the United States be used as a front for the destruction of the United States.

Second, we ask you to request Congress to enact legislation to rid the Government of the United States, once and for all time, of all who, directly or indirectly, serve the interest of the USSR and the philosophy of Communism, rather than the American philosophy of freedom and opportunity.

If you do these things, Mr. President, you will live in history as one of our great Presidents.

If you continue to permit your influence and office to be used to destroy our free American way of life, then some day historians will say of you: "He was President in THE LAST DAYS OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC."

Which way do you want it, Mr. President? The choice is in your hands.

Respectfully,

Merwin K. Harsh

President,

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